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BIBLE SOCIETY BULLETIN

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UPPER CANADA BIBLE SOCIETY
102 YONGE STREET, TORONTO.

The Word of God was precious in those days.—1 SAM. iii. 1.

The Word of God is not bound.—2 TIM. ii. 9.

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FEDERATION.

One of the decisions of the delightful and historic Conference of Bible Society Auxiliaries held in Toronto, September 14th and 15th, 1904, was as follows:—

“The Secretaries of this Conference shall send a copy of this scheme adopted by this Conference to all the Auxiliaries for their consideration, and to ask them to signify their judgment thereon not later than Feb. 1st, 1905. When a majority of the Auxiliaries on the basis of the franchise already established, together with the Upper Canada Bible Society, shall signify their concurrence, the Chairman of this Conference shall request such Auxiliaries to appoint their representatives to the General Board, and shall summon the first meeting of the General Board.”

The first part of this decision was promptly carried out by the efficient Secretaries of the Conference, Prof. Tory, of Montreal, and Rev. Jesse Gibson, of Toronto, and all the Auxiliaries were supplied with the report of the Conference, containing the suggested scheme of Federation; thus the first step towards a closer union between the Auxiliaries was taken. We presume this proposition has been taken up and thoroughly considered by the Boards of the various Auxiliaries, and they have or very soon will express their opinion on the subject. It will be noticed that Dr. Hoyles, who was Chairman of the Conference, is authorized to request the Auxiliaries to appoint their representatives to the General Board, and summon the first meeting of the Board, when a majority of the Auxiliaries, on the basis of the Franchise established, shall signify their concurrence in the general scheme of Federation. There will doubtless be many

points of adjustment after the General Board has been appointed, and many things will have to be left to the natural development of the new organization. But the present duty of all the Auxiliaries is to "signify their judgment on the scheme," without delay, in order that the way may be opened for further conference and organization looking towards the realization of the Canadian Bible Society.

We are informed that very few of the Auxiliaries have, as yet, communicated with Rev. Mr. Gibson, the Secretary of the Conference; of course the time has not fully elapsed, but the limit is February 1st, and that date is now near at hand. We would therefore urge the proper officers to give this matter their immediate attention, in order that the fullest benefit may result to the work of the Bible Society from the Conference of last September.

THE BIBLE IN THE WORLD.

The above is the title of the new Monthly Magazine of the British and Foreign Bible Society, which supercedes the "Monthly Reporter." The first number of the new paper has come to hand and if the initial issue is an index of what we are to expect both as to matter and quality of production, the subscriber is to be congratulated upon his good fortune in having such excellent literature coming regularly to his home. The price of this choice Monthly is only 50 cents a year, and one can hardly imagine that small sum bringing larger returns than it will spent in this way. The letterpress work is unusually good and being profusely illustrated, it is a real work of art. But surpassing its mechanical excellence is the matchless literary style that pervades the whole work. Among the writers contributing to the first issue are: The Marquess of Northampton, the Bishop of London, the Bishop of Durham, Principal Fairbairn, Dr. J. Monroe Gibson, the Earl of Stamford, Ian Maclaren, Rev. G. H. Bonfield, Rev. John Sharp, Rev. G. C. H. Reed, Rev. F. W. Macdonald and last but not least, Rev. J. H. Ritson, well known and much beloved in Canada. This array of talent shows the high ideal of our English brethren in their literary work, and that they will be able to maintain this standard of excellence there can be no doubt. While it will be impossible for the "Bible in the World" to do the work which the less pretentious "BULLETIN" is published to do, yet it will supplement the work of our paper in a most helpful way. We sincerely hope it may have a large circulation in Canada. Subscriptions will be received at

the Bible House, 102 Yonge St., Toronto, at the price named above. Mr. Ritson's article is entitled "Our Partners in Canada," from which we quote a few choice sentences :

No man can traverse the Dominion of Canada from ocean to ocean, and see for himself its illimitable wealth of lake and sea, of mountain and plain, without dreaming dreams and seeing visions of its possible future. Its fisheries and its forests, the deep black soil of its boundless prairies, and the unexplored treasure of its mineral deposits, are an asset to the empire not yet fully appreciated. But the people of Canada are a greater asset—fervent in their loyalty to the throne, and unfeigned in their love for the mother country.

There is no reason to doubt the prediction of Sir Wilfrid Laurier that Canada will some day be the home of 100,000,000 souls. A great nation is in process of formation, but its greatness is not assured unconditionally. It is contingent, and contingent, above all else, on the development of its religious life. The opening up of her natural resources and the character of her fiscal policy are matters of vital importance, but the future of Canada depends chiefly on her attitude to those truths revealed in the written Word of God. This fact is recognized by the Committee of the Bible Society in London, and their friends in the Dominion, and for some time they have been facing the problem—How to place within the reach of every immigrant in Canada a Bible in his mother tongue.

It is a perplexing problem. During 1903 over 125,000 people settled in the country, and since March of this year the new arrivals have averaged a thousand a day. The State is anxious to make the immigrant into a Canadian, and the Church is anxious to make him into a Christian Canadian. At this juncture the Bible Society steps forth and offers the Bible—the one Book which can unite Jew and Greek, barbarian and Scythian, bond and free, male and female, and make all one in Christ Jesus. But the problem of Bible distribution admits of no simple solution. We are told that Canada's difficulty is "not its millions, but its miles." It will require a combination of the genius of able business men with the enthusiasm of hardy pioneer missionaries to reach with economy and efficiency those scattered far and wide, on remote farms and lonely ranches, in distant lumber camps and far-off mines. The work will be costly but Canada's first and greatest problem is : How to make her own children a Bible-reading and Bible-loving people.

A Conference of the Canadian Auxiliaries was therefore summoned, and met in Toronto on September 14th and 15th. Dr. Hoyles presided, and to his kindly spirit and able leadership the Bible Society will be forever indebted. On the principle that in unity is strength, it was recommended that there be a federation of the fourteen Auxiliaries and their twelve hundred branches, under the title, "The Canadian Bible Society Auxiliary to the British and Foreign Bible Society." This title is intended to emphasize, first, Canada's own responsibility in Bible work, and,

secondly, to proclaim its oneness with the Parent Society. Such a step is in harmony with all the developments of Canadian life in recent years, politically and ecclesiastically.

Throughout the sessions of the conferences there was felt the presence of an overruling Wisdom and a guiding Hand, and at the close it was with heart and voice that all joined in praising Him "from whom all blessings flow." May God continue to lead our partners in Canada. It is necessary to have up-to-date and perfect machinery, but something more is needed—driving power; and, in this case, that power of the Spirit which is alone the gift of God in answer to the prayer of faith.

THE IMMORTALITY OF THE DIVINE WORD.

One of the choicest articles in the first number of the Bible in the World is one from the pen of Ian Maclaren on the subject named above. Every word of the address is precious but for those who may not have the whole article we give the following paragraph, in which the able author shows how the Bible surpasses all other books in its unique adaptability to the peculiarities of every tongue.

"One ought not to be surprised that the Word of God is at home in every language of the human race. This is, a unique property of the Bible, and proves a Divine inspiration. There is a sense in which a book in one language can be transferred to another, but in the transference the spirit largely evaporates. If one desires to taste the flavour of the great classics of human literature he must read each of its original form. Men count it worth while to master ancient Italian that they may read the *DIVINA COMMEDIA* and some have learnt Spanish that they might know *DON QUIXOTE* at first hand. Moslems forbid the Koran to be translated from the sacred Arabic into any profane speech; and I learn, from the excellent little book published by the Bible Society, and called *THE CONQUESTS OF THE BIBLE*, that a German archbishop, about the time of the invention of printing, prohibited religious books in the vernacular, on the ground that "German was incapable of expressing the deep truths of Christianity"; while Sir William Jones, the learned author of *ASIATIC RESEARCHES*, declared that the character of the Chinese language was such as not to admit of any translation being made into it. There is, however, an excellent Chinese Bible to-day, and no speech has yet been discovered into which the Bible could not be translated and into which it did not carry its undiminished treasure of revelation. This is no reflection, however, on that great Eastern scholar, for what he said may no doubt apply to every

other book except the Word of God. Rules that sweep in all other literature cease to apply when you touch the Bible. Literature is marked off into provinces; when the inhabitant of one crosses the frontier into another he is obliged, like travellers at a custom house, to leave some article behind; but the Bible is like the sun in the heavens, which shineth from above upon all lands—it is like the air which we breathe, and which no man can divide into compartments. It is too little to say the Bible can be translated into every speech; it can be naturalized in every speech, which is a very different thing. No Hebrew Christian can obtain any more from the twenty-third Psalm than an English believer; no Greek can get more comfort from the fourteenth of St. John than the Anglo-Saxon. Pedantic preachers worry their hearers with reference to the original, but for every practical purpose the English version conveys the truth as perfectly as the Hebrew or the Greek. Missionaries translating the Bible into savage dialects use, I presume, our version as a basis, and they may do so with security, for all versions are but as vessels which contain the same water of life. The water adapts its shape to the vessel and fills it to the brim; it can be poured from vessel to vessel. Whatever cup you drink from—Hebrew, Greek, German, or Chinese—it is ever the water of God, of which if any man drink he shall never thirst again. The Bible has saved languages from oblivion; it has raised half-beastly sounds into ordered speech; it has given illiterate languages a literature; it has sustained the standard of the nobler tongues; and beyond all other books together it has made human speech glorious. Like Christ Himself, it is universal.”

THE BIBLE AS WRAPPING PAPER.

How the Scriptures were Introduced into an Armenian Village.

The work of sowing the Bible throughout the Turkish Empire from Constantinople to Bagdad is beset with peculiar difficulties. There is, it seems, a most ridiculous censorship of the Bible. It is a curious illustration “of prejudice” that the “seditious” word “Macedonia” occurring in the New Testament should excite suspicion and mistrust at the Sublime Porte!

In Armenia, too—to give the group of Turkish vilayets its common name—the distribution of Bibles is especially difficult. And yet that it is eagerly read by the natives when it falls into their hands may be gathered from this story told by one of the Bible-men. A copy of the Word of God was given to a patient in the American Hospital and by him carried to his home in that village. Here an Armenian priest took it from the man, and having torn it to pieces threw it into the street. A grocer, seeing it lying there,

picked it up and took it to his shop, where he began to use it as wrapping paper. So for a time olives, cheese, candles, and other things sent forth from that store were wrapped in pages upon which were printed the "Words of Life." In this way one Bible was scattered about through that village and was read by many whose interest was so far aroused that they began asking for more of the same book. The result was that when the colporteur next came around, over one hundred Bibles or portions of the Bible were sold in that village.—"Sowing the Bible," *EVERYBODY'S MAGAZINE* for January.

INDIA AND ITS SUNDAY SCHOOLS.

A paragraph in the report of the British and Foreign Bible Society for the year 1903-4 strikingly illustrates the work accomplished by the Bible Society, its relation to other departments of Christian work, and the immense field yet untouched by the Society's activities. The facts are so striking and the figures so appalling that we give the paragraph a wide circulation:

"Last year the Sunday Schools in India celebrated their Centenary, the first having been established in Serampore on July 9th, 1803, by Felix and Wm. Carey and John Fernandez. To-day Sunday Schools are conducted in thirty-two Indian vernaculars and attended by 300,000 children, there are 7,000 voluntary teachers in 12,000 schools where the scriptures used as text books are supplied far below cost price by the Bible Society.

Our circulation in India has for the fourth year in succession surpassed all previous records. Of the total of 661,000 books, nearly 196,000 were sold by native colporteurs. Nevertheless, 74,000,000 people in India, speaking over a hundred distinct languages—not mere dialects—have as yet no word of the Gospel printed in their own tongue.

SUPPLYING BIBLES FOR THE WELSH REVIVAL.

The British and Foreign Bible Society records some interesting figures in connection with the present Revival in Wales. During the months of November and December, its orders for Scriptures from Wales were over three times the amount for the corresponding months of 1903, and this demand shows no sign of falling off. The following extracts from letters accompanying orders give further indication of the wide-spread influence of the Revival.

A bookseller writes:—"No trouble now to sell Bibles, the trouble is

to get them." Another bookseller writes :—" Please send these on at once. Great demand for Bibles now the Revival is doing such havoc (!) in our midst." A third bookseller writes :—" I find an increased demand for Bibles and religious literature since the great Revival wave burst over Cymra." Yet another writes :—" The greater part of the Bibles are ordered by Saturday. The demand is by Revivalist people. Do your best and let us help them."

BIBLES FOR THE BALTIC FLEET.

While the Russian war-ships were passing through the Suez Canal, their crews purchased 700 copies of the Scriptures in Russian, during one day and night from the British and Foreign Bible Society Colporteurs, who were allowed on board at Port Said.

EDITORIAL NOTES.

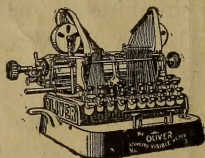
THE Board of Directors has appointed a committee to make arrangements for the annual meeting of the Upper Canada Bible Society to be held on the evening of March 7th. The committee are sparing no pains to make the meeting a great success, as the plans when announced will show.

THE Parkdale Branch will hold its annual meeting in the Western Baptist Church, Lansdowne Ave., Toronto, on Wednesday evening. March 8th, all the prayer meetings of that section of the city being withdrawn. The courtesy of the pastors and the enthusiasm of the churches in Bible Society work in the west end of Toronto is phenomenal, and accounts for the large success that has attended the work of that Branch.

LAST month we published the list of contributions to the funds of the Bible Society for the preceding month ; this month no such list appears. Space forbids it, and while we recognize the value of such a publication, it has been decided to omit it this month, to resume it again when the list for the first month of the year is ready, namely, in the February issue, thus we will give the receipts for the year complete, and have time to make the necessary arrangements for space without encroaching seriously upon the reading matter of the paper.

A REPORT has reached us of the very successful meeting of the Quebec Auxiliary of the Bible Society, being its 69th anniversary. The report of the Secretary, Rev. E. J. Stobo, gratefully acknowledged the help given them in their work by the Parent Society in England, and also by the Upper Canada Bible Society. Mr. Stobo is a tireless worker; during the year he has travelled 4,500 miles, preached or lectured 143 times, and in addition has done a large amount of colportage work. Six colporteurs and Bible women are engaged by the Society, and these have called upon 20,221 families, selling and distributing the Word of life. The receipts have amounted to \$6 325.08, and they have contributed \$457.52 to the Centenary fund. The meeting enthusiastically approved the plan of Federation.

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ELIAS ROGERS, *Treasurer.*

Remittances should be addressed to the Secretary, MR. HARVIE, payable to the Upper Canada Bible Society.